The Reconstructionist

Vol. XIII. May 16, 1947 Iyar 26, 5707 No. 7

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the Reconstructionist

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EDITORIALS

THE "NEUTRALITY" OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO UN

THE first phase of the political struggle for justice to our people through the United Nations is over. Our worst fear, that we might not even be given any means of presenting our case before the United Nations until a procedure was adopted which would prejudice it from the outset, has not been realized. The efforts to stack the cards against us have not all succeeded. We have had some support even from nations on whose support we did not count. It is too early, as yet, for an intelligent prognosis of what the ultimate result of the submission of the problem to the UN will be.

Much will depend on the reaction of public opinion in America to the proceedings. In that connection, we cannot refrain from expressing our feeling of humiliation as *American* Jews—a feeling in which we imagine most American non-Jews share—in the failure of the American delegation to UN to take a leading role in implementing what has been the permanent bi-partisan American policy for Palestine ever since the issuance of the Balfour Declaration. Since that time, all our Presidents and successive Congresses have consistently favored the establishment of the Jewish national home in Palestine. Yet our delegation followed the lead of Great Britain in denying to the Jewish people a voice in the General Assembly, although the Arab States and Great Britain, the two parties committed to abrogation or indirect nullification of the Balfour Declaration, have both a voice and a vote.

Our American delegation did not even come forth with the demand that the Jewish Agency, recognized in the Mandate as the official representative of Jewry in all that concerns Palestine, shall be given a voice in the Political Committee. Though not opposed to our being given a "hearing" before that body, it took a "neutral," non-commital attitude to the question. It was willing to leave the decision to the Political Committee itself. Only after a group of some of the smaller nations — Chile, Argentina, Byelo-Russia, Yugoslavia and Uruguay — took the initiative, did it recede from its position and accept their compromise proposal, that, though the Jewish Agency be denied a voice in the Assembly, it should be given a hearing in the Political Committee on which all the nations are represented. It even then insisted on a strictly limited hearing on the terms of reference for the proposed Inquiry Commission and had to be over-ruled by vote of the Political Committee, which approved the Russian proposal for full freedom of discussion by representatives both of the Jewish Agency and of the Arab Higher Committee.

The arguments of the United States del-

egation in justification of its position are very thin and specious. Against Jews' being given a voice (Jews never asked for a vote) in the deliberations of the Assembly itself, the delegation's argument was that the Charter of the UN does not expressly provide for a voice by any but official representatives of member states. Against the granting of a voice in the Political Committee, its argument was that the agenda called only for the settlement of procedural matters such as the appointment of the Commission of Inquiry and that when the Committee shall have brought in its report would be the time to give the Jews a chance to discuss it.

We cannot accept the validity of either of these arguments. That the UN Charter does not expressly confer on the Assembly the right to hear a delegation from a stateless people does not mean that the Charter denies such authority to the Assembly, when considerations of justice and peace call upon it to assert that authority. The argument of the United States delegation thus tended not only to hurt the cause of the Jewish National Home, which the Arab states attacked freely in the course of the debate, but it tended to hamstring the United Nations in future efforts to do justice to peoples that may not yet have achieved statehood.

A statement of the Jewish Agency exposed the ironic implications of this argument. "There is irony in the technical objection that the Jewish people cannot be heard in the General Assembly because their spokesman is not a state. *This is a striking evidence of the validity of the Zionist thesis that a Jewish state must be established in Palestine.*"

The argument that the present stage of the Assembly's action is merely procedural and irrelevant to the substantive issue is so transparently disingenuous as to fool nobody. The substantive issues were vigorously and persistently discussed by our Arab opponents without the American delegation's raising any point of order. It is moreover obviously unjust for the Mandatory Power on the one hand and the Arab states, who, by their own assertions, are "interested powers," on the other, to determine the personnel and terms of reference of the proposed Commission of Inquiry, while the Jews, who are the people on whose behalf Great Britain was given the Mandate over Palestine, are not even permitted a share in the debate.

The most disturbing aspect of the "neutrality" of the American delegation is what it implies with reference to the spirit in which the Truman foreign policy in general is to be carried out. That policy won support in America on the assumption that it was an assertion of the determination of the United States to oppose aggression of totalitarian regimes against small peoples and to defend their rights and liberties. A suspicion, however, remains in the minds of many that America's new role is but a veiled economic imperialism in the interest of certain "interests," and not at all in that of freedom and democracy. The American role in dealing with Palestine will be indicative of which interpretation of the Truman Doctrine is correct.

It does not comport with the power, the dignity, the responsibility of America to remain neutral while considerations that are irrelevant to the demands of justice, freedom and the social welfare of the affected peoples determine the issue in Palestine. Nobody asks that the United States or the United Nations prejudge the case of Great Britain or of the Palestine Arabs and consider only the interests of the Jews. But all decent Americans will want to see the American representation in the UN stand for a square deal to our people as to all others concerned.

A strong man who looks on idly while a weak one is being pummeled and done to death, without raising a hand to help him, cannot be regarded as morally neutral. He is morally culpable. The American people expect America to use its great power for justice and peace; it wants its delegation to the UN to lead in the right, not to acquiesce in a wrong; to make American public sentiment vocal, not to keep it stifled and subdued in the council of the nations. There is yet time for our delegation to assume a more honorable role than it has so far played. Perhaps it intends to do so. Meanwhile American sentiment should make itself articulate and demand to be represented not misrepresented.

A CHRONIC MALADY OF OUR JEWISH LIFE

ON the first page of a single issue of the New York *Times,* that of May 2, appear two separate news items about the illegal and unethical activities of men whose names indicate that they are Jews. The one tells of indictments for blackmailing in sugar directed against certain Jews who had once been employed by the OPA. The other tells of the conviction of two Jews on a charge of grand larceny in a swindle case. Items like these occur with a frequency indicative of a chronic malady in the social organism of modern American Jewry. We do not mention the names of the persons involved in these latest scandals, because we are not interested in them as individuals. Let the law take its course, convict the indicted if they be proved guilty, and punish the convicted.

But not they alone will suffer for their sins. The whole Jewish people will suffer. By their action they have besmirched the Jewish name and sullied Jewish honor.

Of course, some Jews will say: "We are entitled to our quota of criminals; why assume responsibility for the acts of individual Jewish reprobates? Their misdeeds are no consequence of their being Jews."

Nevertheless, we are not justified in so lightly washing our hands of the whole problem of moral delinquency among Jews. We like to take credit for the great and good among us. We proclaim with pride that "All Jews are responsible for one another." We must then be not only concerned but deeply distressed when Jews flagrantly violate standards of behavior. Whether we have more or fewer criminals than other communities is not to the point. As many criminals as we have are too many.

Those of us who point to the disintegration of Jewish life and the need for reconstruction, often encounter indifference to the problem, because people assume that the disintegration is more apparent than real, that it has affected merely the ritualistic aspect of Jewish life, but that our people remain "good Jews" at heart. No assumption could be more false. Not only has Jewish religious observance broken down, but Jewish ethical and moral standards have shared a similar fate. It is this demoralization of Jewry that cries for a reconstruction of Jewish life through the establishment of a reintegrated Jewish community strong enough to bring social pressure to bear in enforcing standards of decent behavior.

But we cannot wait with taking action until this condition is completely satisfied. We must act now. It is encouraging that our civic defense organizations have in recent years become aware of the problem and are making some well directed efforts at solving it. These efforts, however, are not sufficient. The entire community needs to be aroused. What are our rabbinic bodies and our congregational unions, our synagogues and our centers

doing to raise the ethical standards of our people? True, they preach virtue in general and teach morality in platitudes and didactic stories, but how many congregations have committees on ethics that discuss objectionable business practices and try to influence Jews against engaging in them? In how many of the courses of forum lectures offered by synagogues and community centers are the concrete ethical problems confronting the businessman—or, for that matter, the workman and professional man—in the modern world, seriously presented? What studies have been made by our spiritual leaders in the psychological problem of reeducating to a higher standard of values Jews who have been corrupted by the jungle philosophy of our competitive society?

If half of the energy and ingenuity devoted to Jewish apologetics, in convincing the Gentiles that we are not as bad as they think us, were devoted to making us better than we are, it might or might not raise us in *their* estimation, but it would certainly raise us *in our own,* and that is of supreme importance. Not by a complacent acceptance of "our quota" of miscreants can we escape the sense of shame and dishonor, but only by removing the evil from our midst. To this end all organs of Jewish life, especially its religious organs, must devote themselves zealously. We must save our people from the moral degeneracy that threatens it.

HENRY MONSKY

THE sudden death of Henry Monsky took from us a Jewish leader who will be deeply and deservedly mourned. His Jewish interests unlike those of many others of our gifted and honored leaders were not confined to a single area of Jewish life. His services to the Jewish cause through the B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Conference and the many other Jewish movements with which he was identified, were always directed toward healing breaches and restoring the integrity of Jewish communal life. He was a Jew to whom nothing Jewish was alien, who valued every positive manifestation of Jewish life. He was devoted to the synagogue, to Jewish cultural and ethical values, to Eretz Yisrael and to the American Jewish community, and he represented Jewry to the non-Jewish world with dignity and honor.

The circumstances of his tragic death seem almost to have a symbolic significance. For death overcame him while attending a meeting of the American Jewish Conference which he had called into being and which he was planning to make a permanent influence for Jewish unity and solidarity. The death of a soldier on the field of battle is always an inspiration to his comrades to be steadfast in the cause for which he fought. The death of Henry Monsky in the midst of his labors for strengthening Jewish communal life, should similarly inspire us to persevere in the cause that was dear to him and to give his spirit a share in the ultimate triumph of that cause.

HOW NOT TO ACHIEVE INDUSTRIAL PEACE

THE House of Representatives has already passed the Hartley Bill with its detailed provisions to "restore the balance" between labor and management. At the moment, the Senate is debating some of the details of its own version of labor legislation, the Taft Bill, and will probably have adopted it before this issue of the magazine reaches our readers. Both bills are dangerous.

There is great danger that the present Congress will, through legislation, outlaw the closed shop, prevent industry-wide bargaining, legitimize the use of court in-

junctions against strikes which endanger public welfare (and what strike does not in our economy?), prevent foremen from bargaining collectively, deprive unions of many of the welfare privileges enjoyed under present contracts—in short, nullify many of the advantages that have accrued to labor through the Norris-LaGuardia and Wagner Acts.

No reasonable person will dispute the fact that the current industrial unrest is cause for worry. The cycle of rising prices and demands for higher wages forebodes catastrophe and must be halted. Nor will the honest supporter of labor's just demands condone the failure of the labor movement to outlaw jurisdictional disputes and other abuses. These problems must be faced, but not in the way our legislators are facing them.

Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, one of the few Republicans who has retained a sense of balance, hit the nail on the head when he declared recently, "Whenever we pass a law that results in injustice, a law that stirs up the opposition of a large minority, the workability of that law becomes an impossibility." The Hartley and Taft bills must lead to injustice, simply because they fail to deal with the deep-rooted causes of industrial strife. By arousing the unanimous opposition of fifteen million trade union members, the bills, instead of healing the breach between labor and management, will undoubtedy tend to widen it.

Eric Johnston, in an article in the Magazine Section of the New York *Times* of March 30, explained that labor legislation is no panacea for a nation's economic ills. Great Britain, he pointed out, tried to solve the problem of industrial relations through legislation in its comprehensive Trades Dispute and Trades Union Act which followed the general strike of 1926. That act contained many of the provisions of the Hartley and Taft bills, but it failed in its purpose. Strikes continued to occur (even against the government); prosperity remained always around the corner and capitalism gave way to socialism. Legislation can succeed only when it touches at the roots of a problem and when it is supported by a fair proportion of those affected by it.

Mere opposition, however, to reactionary legislation is insufficient. Something more positive is needed. We refer our readers to the suggestion offered by Eric Johnston, in the article cited above, that a permanent management-labor council be appointed by the President. Labor-mangement problems should be handled by the people who meet with them day by day. More is involved than the questions of wages and hours. Mr. Johnston mentions also the serious question of the dignity of labor in the machine age. Management and union alike must concern themselves with the happiness of the worker on the job.

While Johnston made his suggestion only in outline, we think it deserves serious consideration. It may be that labor-management councils should be set up regionally or by industries rather than nationally. Attention might also be given to the possibility of consumer and governmental participation.

The United States is the only country in the world whose labor movement has expressed faith in the capitalist system. This fact should encourage our legislators to make a supreme effort to bring labor and management together on a voluntary basis. For whatever form the American economic system takes in the future, industrial peace can be achieved only through the wholehearted cooperation of all classes.

REALITIES AND VALUES

On May 1st, the Economic Bureau of the Palestine Foundation Fund opened its exhibition, "Palestine—Democracy at Work" in the Museum of Science and Industry at Radio City, New York. The tremendous energy and resourcefulness of the Yishuv, which not even all of the hindrances and interferences of a ruthless military occupation can suppress, are well illustrated by the products displayed.

Prominent among them are those of the fashion industry, particularly in the line of sports wear. These include coats and suits, dresses, blouses and sweaters, and leather goods from belts and compacts to handbags and footwear.

This industry, largely developed by refugee Jews who were among the leading coutouriers of Europe before its domination by the Nazis, has now some two hundred plants in the country and produces millions of dollars worth of goods, of which half are consumed locally and the remainder exported. The Arab boycott did not halt production but led to the search for new markets. These now include a number of European countries, South Africa, India, Persia, Australia and China. France, the very center of the fashion trade has placed many orders for these goods. Doubtless the exhibit will help open a market in the United States.

And the exhibit of the fashion industry is only one feature of many that show the progress made by the Yishuv in science and industry.

▼

The Palestine exhibit is indicative of a growing commercial interchange between America and Palestine; other items in the news indicate a growing cultural interchange.

The New York *Times* of May 2nd gives a glowing account of the reception given to Leonard Bernstein, the American Jewish conductor, composer and pianist, when he led the Palestine Orchestra as guest conductor. The ovation he received moved him to tears and he declared that he had "never seen anything like it—that hysterical screaming audience." He offered to train the ensemble and conduct it on a tour of America. "It could become the greatest orchestra in the world—easily," he said, but it needs a permanent conductor and a hall properly equipped acoustically. A tour of America, he felt, could be used in a campaign to raise the needed funds.

A second item of cultural interchange is the forthcoming visit to America of Habima, the Yishuv's famous theatrical company. This will be its first tour in America in 19 years. Habima is now preparing for the performance of a Hebrew version of Macbeth, under the guidance of its leading director, Z. Friedland, and of Gordon Craig, a pioneer in stage technique, who had suggested the idea to Habima after attending one of its performances when it was on tour in Europe in 1937.

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A letter from Mohandas Ghandi to the Arab League, urged them to offer "hospitality" to Jews who wish to enter their territories. He described the Jews as "an intelligent, learned, active people" who "can serve the country where they live."

We have a profound respect for Ghandi and appreciate his good will. But we are tired of having always to be guests (welcome or otherwise) in other people's homes. This time we want to be hosts in our own. We shall then gladly dispense

hospitality to Arabs, Hindus and others who may wish to sojourn with us.

▼

In the special session of the UN General Assembly, the representative from Poland was one of the few speakers who gave expression to a genuine sympathy with the Jewish position in regard to Palestine. Cynics may see in this a mere continuity of foreign policy with the pre-war anti-Semitic Polish government which was always well disposed to Zionism as a means of getting the Jews out of Poland.

The present government, however, has been encouraging Jews who left the country because of anti-Semitism to return and has promised aid in their rehabilitation. It has, moreover, accorded recognition to the Jews for the aid rendered Poland by the Jewish resistance to the Nazis. It has recently named two streets in Warsaw, *Street of the Ghetto Heroes* and *Mordecai Anielewitch Street,* in honor of the leader of the revolt.

▼

We are interested in an advertisement which appeared in the May 1st issue of *The Jewish Advocate* of Boston. It was inserted by members of Local 3 of the United Office and Professional Workers of America, CIO, who are employed by the Associated Jewish Philanthropies of Boston, with whom the union is evidently engaged in some sort of dispute.

The ad begins: "Are you opposed to unions? Your representatives, the Board of Trustees of the Associated Jewish Philanthropies says that you are." And it concludes: "Attend the membership meeting of the Associated Jewish Philanthropies and speak for democracy in the Jewish community."

We are in no position to judge the specific questions at issue between the Board of Trustees and the protesting employees, but we like the method the employees are using. We like it because it calls for a democratic acceptance of responsibility and assertion of authority by the membership of a communal agency. The tendency to delegate all responsibility and power to officers and trustees is not a wholesome one.

▼

Two items culled from reports of the *Religious News Service* of the same date, April 9, 1947 are interesting when read in juxtaposition.

The first is a statement by the Rev. Dominic Brady, of the Catholic University. Addressing the National Catholic Education Association in Boston, he said that "the only answer to the challenge of Communism is the full Christianization of our democracy."

The second item tells of four Connecticut Protestant doctors who were dismissed from the staffs of two Catholic hospitals for espousing a birth-control bill pending in the general assembly.

If "Christian democracy" comports with the use of economic sanctions to limit freedom of speech of those who do not accept the tenets of the Catholic Church, Americans should be on their guard against the attempts to Christianize American democracy. Our most cherished liberties would never have been won if the Roman Catholic conception of the "Christian" relation of Church and state had prevailed.

Before it is safe to Christianize democracy something will have to be done by Christians to democratize Christianity.

Reconstructionism, Kashrut and Vegetarianism*

By DAVID KATZ

CURRENT efforts by prominent Jewish thinkers in our Seminaries to reconstruct Judaism, to devise for it new forms and give it new reasons for existence, have inspired me to jot down a few thoughts of my own on this subject. If we are going to discuss reconstruction or reform, we must naturally first stop to inquire what is wrong with the thing we want to reform? Why has the traditional Jewish religion lost its hold on the Jewish masses? What changes are needed to bring it into better harmony with the times? Would such changes appeal to the natural temper and predisposition of the Jewish people?

What Has Happened to Jewish Preeminence in Religion?

Everybody agrees that the modern notion of religion is definitely dissociated from fanaticism and superstition. We no longer appeal to the masses to conform to a prescribed rule of conduct based on some mythical interpretation of the process of creation or on the promise of some very special reward or punishment in the hereafter. Religion to the modern person means a code of morals, a rule of human conduct, the sole reward for which is the consciousness that, in practicing this code, the individual comes nearer to certain basic axioms of justice, and society as a whole advances toward a better ultimate state of mutual relations.

Well then, are the Jewish people naturally predisposed toward a high code of morality? Would a religion, reformed to the point where its principal aim is to improve one's conscience, have a natural appeal for the Jew? I believe that historical facts clearly point to an affirmative answer. The Jews have always been preoccupied with matters of conscience, fair conduct, and the aim for ultimate justice.

In the sidra *"Mishpatim"* (Exodus, XXI ff.), the Hebrews while still wanderers in the desert laid down the principles for better relations between man and man. The Psalms are replete with introspective passages expressing endeavor to keep one's conscience clear before the Lord. The dreams of the Prophets are quoted to this day as suggesting standards for fairness and world peace. And through all generations, we find the Jews in the forefront of movements intended to help the oppressed, free the slave, and insure international harmony.

From this viewpoint, the Jewish people truly were in a sense a selected people. It has pleased History to wake up the Jewish conscience just a few "minutes" before the rest of the world. Assuming that the natural process of development tends to refine man's soul so that he continually widens the breach between himself and the brute from which he sprang, it was inevitable that, at some point on the earth's globe, a spark of conscience should awaken in a people and make them the vanguard of the evolutionary process in this respect. The process could not well have happened at all points of the globe in the same instant. The apples on a tree do not all ripen at the same moment. It was the Jew's fate to be among the first to mature in this field.

Well, then, if the Jews are by history predisposed toward a high degree of morality, and if our religion is so deeply in-

* Without being committed to the views expressed in this article, we publish it as an interesting appeal for vegetarianism on specifically Jewish grounds.—*Editors.*

volved with fairness and justice, and if our sacred books contain those gems of ideal social behavior of which our rabbis love so much to tell us in their Friday evening sermons, then what is wrong? Why is there a crisis? Why do we find in our generation a tendency on behalf of our professionals and our rich people and our intellectual proletariat to run away from religious tradition? Why do our children grow up in abysmal ignorance in so far as the religion of their ancestors is concerned? Why do we have reform movements? And why do these reform movements continually take one step forward and two steps backwards, thereby continually confessing to failure?

Some seek the answer in the association of traditional religion with superstitions and fairy-tale beliefs, which are not acceptable to the modern way of thinking. Others blame the ungodly amount of tedious and burdensome daily rituals required of the Orthodox Jew (such as *"dovning"* three times a day with a physical masquerade of fringes and phylacteries), which are not adjustable to the rush-and-hurry tempo of our modern city life. I believe, however, that the root of the trouble goes deeper than that. If the superstitious beliefs and tedious practices were the only obstacles to faithful religious adherence by our city-bred Jews of the present generation, then the classical Reform Movement which started some 150 years ago should have flourished and gotten a deep hold on the Jewish temperament. Yet, we do not find this reformed brand of religion to have become truly a mass movement among Jews. If it had, there would be no occasion for seeking new reforms and reconstructions.

The fact is, that although on the average modern Jews find many of our traditional practices burdensome and unwelcome, they stubbornly refuse to dissociate themselves from others, even though these are perhaps equally difficult and burdensome. One such deeply rooted and tenacious practice, all the reformers to the contrary notwithstanding, is *kashrut*.

The Psychological Significance of Kashrut

What is *kashrut*? *Kashrut* is a mode of behavior by which the religious Jew has come into the habit of being choosy about his meals. If you offer certain Jews a meal of meat, no matter how hungry they may be, they will first ask questions, and will not eat it unless the answers to the questions, nay the proofs to the answers, are in accord with their religious upbringing. And this habit has been with the Jew for several thousand years. And with this habit he has suffered through 2,000 years among the Gentiles. He has always been *different* respecting food. His habit set up a social barrier between him and his Gentile neighbor. Often, it may have cost him a business deal, or a promotion, or a chance to be elected to a fraternity. But he has always been stubborn about it, until just a few decades ago.

In recent years, the Reform Movement has broken down the barrier. The M.D. or university professor no longer lets a piece of ham stand between him and success. But what do we see? In still more recent years, the Reform Movement itself is gradually being reformed. There is a trend to soften Reform Judaism by some such compromise brands as Conservative Judaism and Reconstructionism. Although the conservative synagogue has not yet come to the point where it makes the observance of *kashrut* a condition for belonging to the synagogue, it has been and is quietly advocating a return to *kashrut*. You see, an inborn habit can be temporarily put to sleep, but never completely killed.

Now then, what does all this add up

to? So far we have a series of inconsistent and contradictory observations. The Jew is by heredity predisposed toward introspection and deep conscience, yet he detaches himself so eagerly from the faith of his fathers after the first spark of modern education. He is tired of the laborious physical practices which his traditional religion imposes upon him, yet he voluntarily subjects himself to a more difficult life by clinging to *kashrut* and a few other symbolic rituals. He develops a Reform Movement for some 150 years, then he steps back and seeks to readjust the reform. Why all this contradictory behavior?

The answer in my opinion is that our average Jew still has that inborn thirst for ethical conduct; he still searches his conscience and is still eager to follow a religious doctrine. But our traditional faith (like most faiths of the world today) does not go far enough to satisfy the thirst. When stripped of fairy tales and superstitious practices, our classical religion has not much left in it as a current guide to moral conduct. Although very far advanced over the rest of the world several thousand years ago, the accumulated teachings of our sages have very little of intrinsic ethical value by which to *excel* the best of world thought today. We may have been "chosen" 3,000 years ago, but we did not stay chosen. The world has caught up with us.

By this I do not mean to say that the world has become just, fair and ethical in conduct. Unfortunately, very much the contrary is in evidence. But what I am trying to say is that the *best* of world thought has caught up with the Hebrew way of thinking along the lines of ethics and good conscience. We no longer have to go back to the Bible as the source of all that is good. Many of the world's philosophers and thinkers, both Jewish and non-Jewish, are as keenly aware of the wrongs of our present-day human relationships, and are as eager to sacrifice themselves in the struggle against such wrongs, as were our Prophets and great Rabbis. So, when our college-bred intellectual has discarded the outward ceremonies and rituals which characterize the Orthodox Jewish religion, he finds that what is left is a system of ideals which are equally matched, and perhaps much better expressed, by modern world thinkers. He has no longer any urge to go to the rabbi or religious leader for guidance; an intellectual club or a subscription to a philosophical magazine would fill the bill just as well. But more often, this is not pursued either; for, once the habit of going to a designated place for moral inspiration is broken, the person lapses into indifference and prefers to take his relaxation in bridge-playing or betting on horse races rather than in philosophial studies.

How Jewry Could Regain Preeminence in Religion

I believe that the Jewish religion will become stimulating and dominating upon the natural predisposition of the Jew, if it will take another step forward in the field of morals and again outstep the rest of the world by a thousand years. I mean that the Jewish religion must wake up and condemn the base, bloody and brutal human trait of our times of butchering animals for food. Yes, I am talking *vegetarianism,* if you must put a label on my thoughts! I am voicing condemnation of the carniverous habit of eating meat; a habit so universal now, that it is taken as a matter of fact and is not condemned as a crime by any of the leading religions of the world. A few minor religious sects do advocate and practice vegetarianism today. I may name the Christian sect of Seventh Day Adventists, and some forms of the Hindu religion. I am not sufficiently familiar with either of

them to state clearly on what motives or beliefs their vegetarianism is based or how far it extends. But I am not interested in these at the moment. I am now addressing Jewish readers and I propose to prove that abstinence from eating flesh is a religious trait which should particularly concern the Jewish reformer for the following two important reasons:

1) Only a mode of behavior like vegetarianism can fully satisfy the instinctive habits and inherent religious predisposition of the Jew; and

2) Only by condemnation of flesh eating can the Jewish religion acquire such an intrinsic and advanced value as to become a sacred treasure in the heart of every Jew, with which he would not part no matter how many college degrees he has been awarded or how many pieces of real property he has acquired.

I might add to the above a third "only"; namely, that only through adoption by the ubiquitous and stubborn Jewish people can the ideal of diet free-of-carnage ever become truly a world movement, and hope in the end to become the habit of entire humanity. But this third motive need not concern us for the moment.

The Psychological Significance of Kashrut

Is it true that only a mode of behavior like vegetarianism can give full expression to the natural, inherent, predisposition of the Jew? My answer is: Definitely, yes! Let us go back and take another look at *kashrut*. How do we explain this stubborn, historical habit of *kashrut*? What is the scientific or psychological reason for its existence?

Inherited tradition? — Yes, but not enough.

Inherent desire to be different? — Debatable, but in any event not enough.

Fear of punishment in the World to Come? — Yes, with some individuals or with some generations. But we can hardly explain the interest of the modern Jewish religious movements in *kashrut* by this motive.

Viewed scientifically, *kashrut* is a psychological reaction. It is a defense against an inborn feeling of guilt. The human conscience, as it gradually develops, revolts against the brutal practice of butchering animals for food. And the Jewish conscience, being, as I have noted, in the vanguard of evolution in this respect, was probably more sensitive on this point than others. Unfortunately, because of surroundings or other historical influences, this feeling of guilt in the Jewish heart has not issued in an open and clear break with the abominable habit of flesh-eating. So in conformity with the laws of psychology, this sense of guilt became side-tracked into a mental defense, into a camouflage, into a soothing formula. The Jews talked themselves into believing that by killing the animal in a very peculiar manner, and by a very learned professional, the animal suffers less during its murder, and the habit of eating its flesh becomes less revolting.

We shall not take time to go into further details on this defense mechanism and its falsehood. But I will take time to point out that we were not alone in feeling the guilt and in working out a defense mechanism. Thus, the Hindus have evolved the concept of the sacredness of the cow. Why the cow alone? Why not the ewe? the chicken? the turkey? But it is a psychological defense mechanism, and mechanisms of this sort never follow logic. I understand that the ancient Egyptians likewise deified the sheep. Again, they isolated the sheep for protection, and probably ate without qualms of conscience the other animals.

A Psychological Interpretation of Table Etiquette

The world at large, more especially, the European world or the Christian world, has evolved *table etiquette*. Table etiquette is nothing but a defense mechanism against the suppressed but natural feeling of guilt for the butchering of animals for food. Its mental evolution is easy enough to trace.

Picture for yourself man—the master—living on a farm surrounded by friendly animals. He has a dog and a sheep, and other living creatures. Daily feeding and care of the animals develops a sort of mutual love among the individuals of this group. Toward the end of the season, man, the master, takes a big sharp knife and cuts the sheep's throat. Blood gushes out. The dog comes running and licks the fresh, warm blood. The master observes this and inwardly resents it. "You, faithless dog! You lick the blood of your friend with whom you played in the field just this morning!" Deep in his conscience something else troubles him, but he suppresses it: it then goes into his subconscious mind. Later, when the meat is served to the master and his guests; he spreads a white, ironed table cloth. Napkins, silver and plates are put on the table in a very specifically prescribed social manner: the knife on the right; the fork on the left, etc. If, God forbid, you pick up a piece of meat with your salad fork, or vice-versa, you are a barbarian! In this fashion the conscience of the master is soothed. He has arisen above his dog! He has added a social ritual to his eating and transformed it into the noble act of "dining."

Vegetarianism—The Answer to a Jewish Religious Need

If the Jew's religion were to offer him sudden relief from all this burdensome psychological conflict, it would find him a willing and grateful acceptor. It would both suit his instinctive habits of being *different* in matters of food, and would give him a well merited exultation for keeping his conscience clear.

Now, as to the second part of the proposition. Think of what a boost the Jewish religion would receive from the adoption of such a dogma! Clearly, the Jewish religion would once more become the leader among religions. It would acquire such a deep and dignified intrinsic value, that the most outspoken of atheists could, with a clear conscience, confess his allegiance to this faith. It would support the Jews' inherent tendency to be *different* in matters of food; but instead of muttering an excuse under his nose for adhering to some inherited ritual of dubious logic, the Jew would now be proud to practice his abstinence. He would have both a logical reason for it, and a moral urge to stick to it, no matter what the penalties. Our path in the world by no means becomes easier, but our faith would once more be worth dying for. At the same time, we would be kindling the torch for the rest of the world. And this latter point is of utmost and universal importance.

In this day of precise scientific thinking and wholesale mutual extermination, it is very essential for the world to acquire a standard of morals, to steady its sails among the treacherous reefs of scientific materialism. Human thinking has developed to such a refined and admirable degree where we can postulate some very complicated orbit systems inside of inconceivably small particles, and can harness these almost imaginary little atoms to destroy cities for us. Yet, this same admirable keenness of thought has not exerted sufficient influence on our conscience to halt our tendency for mutual destruction by the millions. Why the paradox? The answer is simple. Keen analytical

thought by itself is not enough. Thought must be mixed with sentiment. The brain must cooperate with the heart. Or as the Rabbis would express it: You must join intellect with the fear of God. *"Reshit hokhmah yirat adonai."* ("The first principle of wisdom is the fear of God.")

But what chance has our archaic concept of religion in competition with keen scientific thinking? You cannot control the atomic bomb by a fairy tale about a garden, a fruit-tree and a serpent. Nor can you influence a scientifically trained mind with evasive talk, compromise, hoodwinking a deep seated wrong, and using sophistry to hide the truth.

No! Our faith must arise in dignity. It must match in clear thinking that of the electronic physicist, and it must be just as absolute in aim and resolve. The scientist pushes his researches for knowledge to the absolute. To be his partner in guiding human conduct, religion must equally push for the absolute in good conscience, and must be crystal clear in its logic. Compromises, fairy tales, defense mechanisms have no place in the scientific world; they should, with equal force, be swept out of the religious field. Religion must demonstrate faithful and firm loyalty to its ideals. *It must demonstrate competence in its own domain.*

Only after man has learned to abhor the brutality of slaughter will he refrain from practicing it against his fellow beings. We cannot learn to live in godly harmony among ourselves as long as we habitually exonerate butchery with specious philosophical prattle. The crisis is great, and time is short. It would fit Israel's tradition and destiny to wake up and point the way.

Who Live in Other Months

By MAMIE G. GAMORAN

"On the 18th of April in '75,
Hardly a man is now alive,
Who remembers. . . ."

"On the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard 'round the world."

Come far away to another land
On an April morn.
There once again, in a later age,
Were heroes born.

The crowded Warsaw Ghetto streets
A battlefield.
Embattled tailors, cobblers, rabbis, lawyers, peddlers, students, clerks.
No shot heard 'round the world,

But endless April days and nights of blood and death,
And startling courage of little men
Who rose to heroes' stature, and then died,
Unnoted by the world.

Why did they die? What was their hope?
The Concord Hymn in simple terms will tell.

"Spirit, that made these heroes dare
To die and leave their children free. . . ."

Ah, Men of Warsaw, you have died in vain!
Your children are not free.
Their whitening bones are found in unmarked graves, in dusty ditches
Or charred in some inferno.
A few escaped? They sit in camps, still guarded,
Or sail the seas. To where?
The harbor lies before them; they see
The Promised Land. It's not for them.

You Men of Concord, did you die for this?
Did you resolve
That only your own children should be free?
Did you not hope
That men of every clime and every age
Should share your gift?

Now April is a symbol.
Men died in April to make others free.
And we who live in April, and will live in other months,
Can but redeem those dead.
Their children must be free.

Ours is the heritage,
From Plymouth Rock to Concord, on to Iwo Jima.
Liberty is bred in us, taught to our children,
How oft repeated, both by tongue and pen!

The Word, then, has been spoken.
Where's the deed to match it?
To open wide the gates,
To set upon the road to freedom,
By land and sea,
The Warsaw remnant.
So they, some strong, some stumbling,
Achieve the glory for which their fathers died.
Their fathers—
Men of Warsaw; Men of Concord.

Democratization and Other Problems in Jewish Communal Organization

By SAMUEL DININ

This is the conclusion of an article the first part of which appeared in our preceding issue. In the first installment, Dr. Dinin described the organizational set-up of the Los Angeles Jewish Community and compared it with other communities of varying size, pointing out in each case the relation of their organizational structure to the problem of democracy in Jewish communal life. He also discussed the relation of the Community Councils to Jewish Welfare Funds in Los Angeles and elsewhere. In this issue's installment, Dr. Dinin treats of the relations of the Community Council to the Federations, and to national Jewish organizations, again with reference to the problem of devising the best democratic machinery for Jewish life in America. —*Editors*

The Federation and the Community Council

AS was indicated in our last installment, it is only in the smaller Jewish communities that there has been a tendency to merge the Federation, the Community Council and the Welfare Fund. The larger communities have been too complex and the vested interests in them too entrenched to make possible this kind of merger at the present time. Although the same type of vested interests prevails in many aspects of Jewish communal activity in Los Angeles, and although the official leadership has not as yet taken any steps toward the amalgamating of the two interrelated central agencies, an increasingly large number of active citizens are beginning to urge the merger of Community Council and Federation.

As in other communities, the Federation up to several years ago was *the* strong Jewish communal organization in the city. The Jewish Community Council, organied 13 years ago, had to struggle for its present position of pre-eminence. For several years, the head of the Federation, Dr. Karpf, was also director of the Jewish Community Council and the Welfare Fund Campaign. As the Jewish Community Council became more democratic and more representative of the Jewish community, it came into conflict with Federation leadership.

The difference between the leadership of the Council and the leadership of Federation has been mainly on the question of whether central planning in Jewish community life should be entrusted to a larger and more representative group or to a much smaller and less representative body of citizens.

The Federation has been an institutional member of the Jewish Community Council from its very inception and has participated actively in the campaign of the United Jewish Welfare Fund. Federation leadership still exercises a powerful influence both in the deliberations of the Community Council and in the conduct of the United Jewish Welfare Fund. The Federation at first got half of its funds from the Jewish Welfare Fund and the other half from the general Community Chest. Because the Chest grant has remained virtually static, the increasing needs of the Federation have had to be met by the Jewish Welfare Fund. The Council, through the Welfare Fund, has assumed more and more responsibility for Federation's operating deficit until in 1946 the Council allocated to Federation over $437,000, which was far more than the amount given by the Community Chest to Federation Agencies.

There are those in the Jewish community who feel that the Federation should become the official social service arm of the Jewish Community Council as the Bureau of Jewish Education is its educational arm. If the Federation became an organic part of the Jewish Community Council, the Council would be able to effect economies through integration of over-lapping functions and to make the work of the social service agencies more responsive to the needs of the community as a whole. The Federation people naturally wish to maintain the present relationships and want to guard zealously the powers and the prerogatives of the Federation and its affiliated social service organizations.

The discussions carried on last Spring by representatives of the Federation and Community Council did lead to a recommendation that the whole problem be explored and that an attempt be made to get one director for the Community Council and the Federation. However, this recommendation was later voted down by the Federation Board.

There was another suggestion that, as a substitute for merger or for combined administration under a single executive, there be a division of functions as between the Council and Federation. This suggestion proved unfeasible for the obvious reason that certain community functions just cannot be divided. For example, activities in behalf of youth might come within the scope of the Community Council via the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Youth Council and the Bureau of Personnel Relations, all of them parts of the Community Council. On the other hand, Federation, too, has a relationship to youth through the Centers, Camp Max Strauss and Jewish Big Brothers.

The problem of democracy in Federation has been one of the factors which complicated the relation of the Federation to the Jewish Centers Association. The Jewish Centers Association, which is an association of all the Jewish centers aiming to co-ordinate and expand the work of the centers in the community, has been a part of the Federation. It derives its funds from the Federation, which in turn derives its funds from the United Jewish Welfare Fund and the Community Chest. During the past year conflicts arose between the Federation and the Jewish Centers Association as to the relationship to the Federation of the Jewish center program, which as indicated above, involves also the question of democracy in Federation. The JCA leadership contends that Federation is undemocratic in its set-up. Its Board of Trustees consists of thirty-nine members, one-third of whom are elected or re-elected each year. The Federation agencies as such have no direct representation on the Board. Whether this or that agency leader serves on the Federation Board depends on the nominating committee of the Federation. Nomination for the Board by independent petition is circumscribed. Fifty signatures of members are required to nominate a maximum of two candidates. In other words, if it were necessary for some reason to nominate an entire slate of thirteen, three hundred and fifty signatures would have to be obtained. This provision, incidentally, was placed in the Federation by-laws at a time when that number constituted almost the entire membership of the Federation. New members joining the Federation may not vote until the second year of membership though they begin paying dues the first year. Furthermore, the by-laws of the Federation may be amended only by the thirty-nine trustees; the membership of the Federation has little or nothing to say about this matter.

These conflicts between the JCA and the Federation have come to such a point

that the Jewish Centers Association has given notice of withdrawal from the Federation as of March 1 (the Federation by-laws require that notice of withdrawal be given by December 1 in order to be effective by March 1, the beginning of the fiscal year.) What will happen, it is too early to predict. The Jewish Centers Association may reconsider its withdrawal and remain in the Federation, or it may conduct an independent campaign for funds. There are those in the Jewish Centers Association who want it to become an arm of the Jewish Community Council in the same way as the Bureau of Jewish Education. What the Council will do about it remains to be seen—the action of the Jewish Centers Association was taken without prior consultation with the Council.

It may take several years before any change can be made in the present relationship of the Federation to the Community Council. The inexorable trend of Jewish community life in the United States, however, is towards a co-ordination of all the service agencies of the community under communal control and responsibility. Los Angeles is one of the large Jewish Communities where such communal centralization is being discussed, privately if not officially. Detroit is officially discussing mergers and Newark has a central communal over-all agency. The experience of these large Jewish communities and their progress toward communal centralization will be watched all over the country.

The Relation of National Agencies to Local Community Councils

That the relation of national agencies to local Community Councils has begun to constitute a problem everyone recognizes. What to do about it, however, cannot always be easily determined. In a recent article first delivered as a paper before the National Conference of Jewish Social Welfare, Mr. Martin D. Cohen, has this to say: "The serious threat to central community machinery today comes from outside the local community, from the programs and agencies operating on a national scale and on what has been called an ideological basis; to be more specific, the overseas and civic protective agencies. These agencies have so far successfully resisted all the efforts of the local communities to influence their program effectively. They have become the big bad wolves of the Jewish community organization, and the whipping boys which we hold responsible for some of our own failures." However, to blanket all national organizations in this way is not always fair. There is a great deal of work which can be done only on a national basis, such for example, as the work of the Joint Distribution Committee. JDC, itself, has organized this year a Council of cities to give due representation in its deliberations and work to local Jewish Community Councils. JDC and other organizations as well, recognize the necessity for becoming more representative and more responsive to the needs of local Jewish communities.

The Reconstructionist has emphasized during the years the need for organizing a sort of Council of Jewish Community Councils which should take over the work of national organizations catering to the overseas and national needs of the Jewish people.

However, the realization of this objective is, first of all, many years off and, secondly, does not reckon with problems which for the present cannot come under the purview of a national Council of Jewish Community Councils. What to do in the transition period and what to do about problems of the second category, require careful deliberation.

The field of defense has always been the target of criticism in this matter and

rightly so. We have four national organizations, besides many less important groups, dealing with defense work. The work done by these organizations suffers from overlapping and duplication on a national scale. These organizations have come into communities and have tried to set up branches of their organizations in each of the communities even where there were Community Councils already dealing with the problem locally. There has thus been competition not only among the national organizations interested in defense but between these organizations and defense committees in the local Community Councils. All of the national defense organizations deal not only with national problems as such but perforce must deal with problems of defense in the local Jewish communities. During the past few years, there has been established the National Community Relations Advisory Council, which is trying to clarify the relations of the national organizations doing defense work and to attempt to eliminate duplication and over-lapping. The progress which has been made has necessarily been slow. This is understandable, particularly in view of the several attempts in this direction which have failed. A similar process of clarification has to be launched in the local communities.

The Los Angeles Jewish Community Council, for example, has a community relations committee which is charged with the responsibility of dealing with problems of defense in the local community. However, the United Jewish Welfare Fund of the Jewish Community Council gives large yearly grants to each of the national defense agencies each of which is active in the local community as well. The Los Angeles Community Council has, therefore, established a committee to bring unity and greater effectiveness into the work of defense. This is the merest beginning in the direction of unity in one area of Jewish organizational life. How to proceed with this and other problems needs all the experience and thinking on the subject we can get.

How national organizations affect other local agencies has not been stressed but constitutes as much of a problem. We have, for example, several national organizations of religious bodies. Each of these organizations is now trying to establish a branch in Los Angeles in order to promote the work of the particular rabbinical and synagogue group. Each of these organizations is rightly interested in the problem of Jewish education. In addition, there are national organizations such as the Workmen's Circle, the Jewish National Workers Alliance, the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order, which are also interested in the work of the schools in the local Jewish community. Each of these organizations is interested in extending its influence in a city like Los Angeles. The Bureau of Jewish Education, as an arm of the Jewish Community Council, has brought together practically all of the schools in the community and is trying to build an effective system of Jewish education in which it will be possible for schools of different ideologies to work together. The different national organizations have a legitimate interest in the Conservative, Reform, Orthodox or Yiddish local schools. However, if they set up competing bodies or committees which will in time become more militant, they will act as divisive forces in the local Jewish community. How to clarify this relationship, how to provide for the legitimate needs and interests of national groups without interfering with the work and objectives of the local community, requires careful study.

These are only some of the many areas in which clarification of relationships between national and local groups is necestary. We have here in miniature a ques-

tion of "states' rights" vs. the rights of the national government. We shall need long and careful exploration of this matter to determine which of the areas of Jewish life should be left to local communities, which areas should be left to national organizations, and in which areas there must be common direction and control.

The Jewish community in America is relatively young and is just beginning to feel its strength. During the past two decades there have been increasing and satisfying signs of democratization and responsibility in Jewish community organization. Jewish community organization in America is still in its infancy in this regard. It is easy enough to promulgate a utopian theory of Jewish community organization, but it is far from easy to erect a democratic form of organization that shall work. What we must do is to assess what has been done by way of Jewish organization, to analyze the problems which have arisen and to devise practical ways and means of proceeding from the present point to a greater democratization of Jewish community organization and life.

Some Notes on the State of Contemporary Jewish Music*

By JOSEPH ACHRON

FROM the time of the first attempts of Joel Engel to collect the Jewish Song Material in 1903-4, 25 years have elapsed (now 43 years). A quarter of a century is considered a large span of time in human life but not so in the history of any social movement.

Does Jewish music exist altogether?

This question is very much up to date for people who are interested in it.

The answers given are of various kinds. Some people want to persuade you that Jewish music does not and cannot exist because the Jews have no soil on which the national creativeness can thrive. Others refer to the lack of Jewish musical monuments and draw their conclusion that Jews are not musically minded.

The third group on the contrary want to prove that Jewish music has existed since Biblical times in spite of being dispersed through the whole world and lost in the general mass of music.

The fourth are trying to find some kind of "Jewish Spirit" in music even where none whatsoever can be found (in spite of the composer's being a Jew). There are some other points of view, too, but they are not important to us.

It is important to define the position of Jewish music at the present. Let us go back to the St. Petersburg Society of Jewish Music founded in 1908. The beginning of its activity consisted mainly in collecting ethnographical material and in its harmonization.

The second period of work was the switching to more complicated forms, but nevertheless based on folk materials. The third and most important phase was the period of free creative works bearing a definite stamp of "Jewishness." This last period was the most important one, not only for Jewish music but for music in general.

Only when Jewish music will be able to display samples of individual creations

* These notes were jotted down by the eminent composer in 1927. We are indebted to his widow, Mrs. Marie Achron, for the opportunity to publish them. They should be of interest to all lovers of Jewish music.

worthy of having their place among the music of other nations will it be recognized by the world and occupy its rightful place as a full-fledged member in the history of music.

If Jewish music is being accused of a number of foreign influences, the accusation can be applied in the same measure to any other national music at its birth.

Self-expression is always preceded by imitation. You can notice a definite Italian influence in the first purely Russian compositions. (Glinka—the father of Russian music). When you listen to any Church music, you find quite often a resemblance to the Synagogue chants (tropes). It is a very logical phenomenon, if you remember how the Bible went over from the Jews to other nations and they absorbed and applied it in their own way. The same process happened in the development of Jewish music. As far as the Bible was concerned, why was the origin acknowledged and ascribed to the Jews? The explanation is very simple. The Bible was meticulously written down; but at the same time the music in it (tropes) was only orally transmitted from generation to generation because a musical notation did not exist at that time and the proof of the origin of Jewish music could not be preserved.

Nevertheless, the Jewish music of the Bible does exist and is preserved up to the present time and the Jewish composers have their "soil" in it—a soil that can be very prolific. Strange as it may seem, the necessity for self-expression among Jewish composers came into being almost simultaneously in different parts of the globe.

As a parallel to the Society of Jewish Music in St. Petersburg, around which all the best young Russian-Jewish creative forces were gathered, such composers as Ernest Bloch and Darius Milhaud started to express themselves as Jewish composers, entirely independently. Without going into details as to how characteristically Jewish their compositions are, it is pointed out that their goal was to create a Jewish musical style. Mistakes and errors are unavoidable but they always help to find the right track. It is already possible to point to a number of important compositions of small and large forms, created by Jewish composers in the last few years. In them lies a guaranty of immense potential possibilities.

The Jewish composers were forced to cover in 24 years (even in only 20 years) since the establishment of the Society of Jewish Music, the path which required 100 years and more for other nations.

This is not the time to sum up. Too short a time has elapsed since the beginning of the movement. Not everything has been said in Jewish music; the composers have not had enough time to show their faces. The exsting facts, however, point to the blooming of Jewish music in the very near future.

The St. Petersburg and Moscow composers,* grouped around the Society of Jewish Music are bound to play an important part in this direction.

* The following are the names of some of the principal composers in each of these two groups. In the St. Petersburg group: Joseph Achron, died April 29th, 1943, in Hollywood, Calif.; Michael Milner resides in U.S.S.R.; Solomon Rosowsky resides in Jerusalem, Palestine; Lazar Saminsky resides in New York; Lev Zeitlin died in New York. In the Moscow group: Joel Engel died in Tel Aviv, Palestine; Alexander Krein resides in Moscow; Gregory Krein resides in Moscow; Michael Gnesin resides in Moscow, and many others.

Random Thoughts

PEOPLE who have a passionate desire to understand the mystery of death and evil are like babies reaching for the moon.

Traditional theology babied such people; it led them to believe that they could have the moon.

Modern theology should have the courage to persuade them to grow up.

It should make them realize that they should use their quickened sense of misery and oppression not to cogitate about them but to combat them.

* * *

Bigotry and piety don't mix.

* * *

Religion is not a cloak but a spirit.

We Jews can least afford to identify religion with clericalism.

As long as our people was a theocracy, the Synagogue was coextensive with our peoplehood.

Now that our people can survive only as a democracy, it is inevitable for additional sources of authority and cultural influence to arise as agencies of our peoplehood.

Let the Synagogue cultivate its own garden and beware of wasting its energies and jeopardizing Jewish life by starting a Kulturkampf in our midst.

* * *

We Jews should be grateful to the Church for having preserved for us the writings of Philo, Josephus, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

But the Church in turn is very much in debt to us Jews.

Besides having given it its founder, we provided it with a safe nesting place for almost three centuries.

"It was only under the protection of the privileges which the Jewish *nation* had acquired in the (Roman) Empire," says the Church historian, C. Guignebert, "that the first Christian communities were able to spring up and take root without exciting the suspicion of the Roman authorities."

* * *

Men come to have religion not as a result of their quest for God but of their quest for salvation.

Having arrived at an idea of salvation, they fashion their idea of God in its image.

* * *

Every truth consists of two half-truths.

A fanatic choses one of them, a sceptic neither, and an idealist both.

* * *

The most popular and the most dangerous fallacy is that whatever is indispensable is sufficient.

* * *

In Never-Never Land, as soon as the word goes round that someone was stricken with the small-pox of race or religious hatred, the people stand in line in front of the churches and synagogues, waiting to be spiritually inoculated against it.

* * *

To do good because it pays is to try the right key on the wrong door.

To do good for its own sake is to try the right door with the wrong key.

To do good because it enhances life's meaning and worthwhileness is to use the right key for the right door.

* * *

Too much opulence, like too much sunshine, produces dry-rot.

* * *

"The twist is the same—but the taste is different," the motto used in advertis-

ing a pretzel made with butter, might as well serve for a reinterpreted rite.

* * *

All of men's inalienable rights are tantamount to the right of their having what they need to put their abilities to full use.

All of men's untransferable responsibilities are tantamount to their responsibility to make full use of their abilities.

* * *

Moral courage is harder than physical courage by as much as the reach of the mind is greater than the reach of the body.

* * *

Without moral courage, all virtue is merely a way of speaking.

* * *

To be "on principle" either a yes-man or a no-sayer is to be without principle.

* * *

Will a horseless age require our saying, "If wishes were taxis, beggars would never use the subway?"

* * *

The fact that experience seldom entirely vindicates the right does not exempt the right from the need of being tested by experience.

* * *

An individual is mortal because the possibility of his transforming himself is inherently limited.

A group is immortal because it is inherently capable of transforming itself indefinitely.

An individual takes on immortality by identifying himself with a group.

A group takes on mortality by allowing some individual or individuals to absorb its life.

* * *

Frequent repetition of an ideal which is not translated into action is a safe investment in laughing-stock.

* * *

Of the earthworm Darwin said that it takes from the depth and brings to the surface of the soil materials needed for vegetation.

Of the politician Graham Wallace says that he deliberately exploits the subconscious non-rational elements of the human mind.

That the earthworm performs a useful service there can be no doubt.

Whether the politician does is a moot point.

* * *

We heard a preacher dilate upon the fact that Yitzhak (Isaac), the Second of the Patriarchs lived longer than either his father Abraham or his son Jacob.

He ascribed that to Yitzhak's having been of a cheerful disposition. This is suggested by his very name and by the element of laughter which figures in more than one incident associated with that name.

* * *

Plato takes Homer to task for picturing the gods as hilarious with inextinguishable laughter.

In his ideal Republic he deems it improper for the guardian of the State to indulge in laughter.

That may be the origin of the "stuffed shirt."

* * *

Resh Lakish, a rabbi of third century Eretz Yisrael, would occasionally burst out laughing.

But he learned to restrain himself after he heard his colleague Rabbi Johannan quoting an ancient authority to the effect that, so long as we Jews are a homeless people, it is not right for us to regale ourselves.

The inference, of course, is that in the Coming Age, when Zion will be rebuilt, "our mouth will be filled with laughter." (Ps. 126, 2).

M. M. K.

Book Notes

JEWS IN THE POST WAR WORLD

JEWS IN THE POST-WAR WORLD, by Max Gottschalk and Abraham G. Duker. New York: The Dryden Press, 1945; 224 pages.

ONE of the few attempts to review the present status of the Jews of Europe and to recommend programs of action to meet current needs, is this brief treatise by Gottschalk and Duker. This will not be the only ink that will be spilled in order to achieve a modicum of justice for hundreds of thousands who escaped planned and deliberate annihilation, and who remain the dispossessed and the orphans of present-day civilization. What success will be attained is something open to considerable speculation due to the greater desire of the more powerful nations to engage in political strategy for self-aggrandizement, and in power-politics. The millions of stranded European Jews and those who are remaining in their lands of adoption, are among the last items on the world's agenda.

Regardless of the outcome, however, it was desirable that such a definitive work as "Jews in the Post-War World" be written, and that the background, the present status, and the future of the few remaining million Jews facing new forces of disablement and destruction be clearly sketched. This, Gottschalk and Duker have very ably done.

The subject matter of the book is divided into seven sections: the two world wars—a comparison and contrast; how the Jewish communities prepared for peace during World War I; Europe between wars—1919-1939; the position of the Jews in the post-war world; Palestine in the new world; relief, reconstruction and migration; and, Jewish survival in the democracy of the future.

Sketching briefly the differences that faced the Jews of Europe in World Wars I and II, the authors indicate clearly that a much greater problem faces the Jews and the world today, to right the wrongs that have been perpetrated. What Jews are doing by raising $100,000,000 in 1946, and, it is expected, another $170,000,000 in 1947 is quite well known. What UNRRA has done, and what the United Nations and Great Britain have done is also an interesting chapter in achieving, (or perhaps in subverting) justice, and in providing "righteous" treatment in our days of so-called "enlightened statesmanship." Apparently, it is still true that "God helps him who helps himself." To rely on world understanding, and on world integrity and honesty is still to trust a disheartening illusion and a snare.

The section on how Jewish communities prepared for peace during World War I provides an excellent and very valuable summary of all the varied activities, the cross-currents of internal Jewish conflicts, the compromises, and the final successes, at least on paper, (notably the Balfour Declaration), that were achieved. The fact that all of these "successes" were to an extent delusions, is blamed upon "the eventual breakdown of the peace settlement" and the "failure of the Peace Conference to lay the permanent basis for a durable peace."

The review of the state of Europe between 1919 and 1939 sketches briefly, but

quite adequately, the basic insecurities and the forces which finally led to the terrific holocaust of World War II. Isolationism, rampant chauvinism, appeasement, the general disregard of international decencies, conflicting national and political ideologies, general want and insecurity, the inadequacies and the failures of the League of Nations, the rise of Nazism and Fascism, and the absence of any brakes which would effectively hold back the "days of reckoning" finally made World War II inevitable. Will history repeat itself?

The chapter that follows, on the position of the Jews in the post-war world, discusses the significance of the various meetings between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, as they related to the future and the security of Jews in the eastern hemisphere. The material offered is highly speculative, and with the evidence now before us on what has happened since Roosevelt's death is perhaps a bit over-optimistic on the future developments that might provide the Jews of Europe a modicum of the rights so forcefully articulated in the Atlantic Charter.

In the light of what has been going on in Palestine during the past year and more, the section on "Palestine in the New World," illustrates tragically to what extent Jewish hopes and aspirations are thwarted, cheated and sabotaged for the base pursuits of *"Welt-Politik."* Duker and Gottschalk present an admirable review of the place of Palestine in the history and in the yearnings of our people. They trace the modern miracles that have changed a brutally abused soil into one of the garden-spots on earth; the achievements of Zionism; British duplicity and treachery; and the inexcusable conflicts between Zionists and anti-Zionists. The Arab situation and position are very clearly traced in a few excellently written pages.

The discussion of the needs for relief, reconstruction and migration provides a very fruitful basis for turning any confirmed optimist into a shaken and troubled pessimist. Like the patient in a hospital who has been the victim of ruthless attacks and inhuman abuses, he needs sympathetic care with an eye to complete recovery and rehabilitation. But all he gets are investigations, committee meetings, postponements, vituperation over the fact that he is sick and a nuisance, and an occasional "shot in the arm."

The book closes with a stimulating discussion of Jewish survival in the democracy of the future. It is emphasized that Jews must concentrate on making their religious and cultural heritage much more significant and powerful. Not only must that heritage influence their own individual lives and their communal programs, but it must continue to impress its basic moral content in fashioning a more decent and more secure world. The centrality and vital importance of a Palestine from which all can draw inspiration and renewed spiritual vigor is appropriately stressed.

A brief foreword by Senator Leverett Saltonstall, and an excellent index, which is a permanent trade-mark of Abraham Duker's work, are other features of the book.

S. C. Kohs

NEEDED: A SABBATH GUIDE

"SABBATH, THE DAY OF DELIGHT," by Abraham E. Millgram, Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1944, 495 *pages.*

THIS book is an anthology of relevant and interesting material on the traditional "day of delight," ranging from selected laws of the *Shulhan Arukh* to Sabbath humor. As such, it is both scholarly and human.

Like an earlier text on Hanukkah which the Jewish Publication Society put forth,

this volume is a comprehensive reference work on the subject. Through its pages many facets of the Sabbath come to light, as depicted in literature, art, and music; in the Bible, Talmud, and Midrash; in ancient, medieval and modern life. Moreover, like the *Sefer ha-Shabbat* published in Palestine, it is a convenient hand-book for practical use on the part of those accustomed to observing this day. There are *zemirot* with music, stories for children, literary selections, etc.

Within the acknowledged scope of this work, the editor and publishers have adequately discharged their functions. They have demonstrated effectively that the Sabbath *in the past* was not only a meaningful and delightful occasion but a veritable "cornerstone of Judaism." Yet all the more urgently does the question rise, What about *today*?

What we are suggesting is that a companion volume is needed for American Jewry—not an anthology, but a guide; not a description, but a prescription. The present text helps us respond beautifully to the injunction, "*Remember* the Sabbath day." We now need direction toward the fulfillment of the other command, "*Observe* the Sabbath day."

Dr. Millgram provides intimations of this need for us. In discussing the decline of attendance at Sabbath services, he points out that "scientific discoveries have challenged the Biblical story of creation and have deprived the Sabbath of a vital sanction. Biblical criticism coupled with the concept of evolution have weakened the accepted belief in the divine origin of the Sabbath institution, and have made service attendance an 'elective' in Jewish life." Moreover, "the Industrial Revolution has made Sabbath synagogue attendance almost an impossibility. The present-day economic system is in direct conflict with the observance of the Jewish Sabbath" (p. 161). The author rightly concludes that "if American Jewry is to revitalize the Sabbath, it must give the problem serious and immediate attention."

Intellectually and sociologically, the Jew today lives in a new world. That accounts for "the incongruity between the theoretical profession and the radical violation" of this holy day. The current mood of those who love the Sabbath is one of nostalgic yearning for an impossible return. Even when limited opportunities appear, such as in late Friday evening services or a five-day work week, the basic rationale for a traditional Sabbath in our modern civilization seems to be missing.

Nonetheless, as one considers the variegated Sabbath literature reflected in these pages and studies its historical observance, one cannot escape the perception that many timeless values lie enshrined in this sacred day. These values must be extracted, reinterpreted, and applied to our contemporary experience, so that the Sabbath may yet again become a source of delight.

Fundamentally, the Sabbath has been, through a long past, and ought still be today representative of the following practices and values.

(1) *A celebration of creative work* . . . "a memorial of the work of creation"; hence, a stimulus to further creativity. "Man is a partner of God in the work of creation," and therefore must help in attaining to that day which will be a "perfect Sabbath."

(2) *A surcease from labor* . . . a day of emotional as well as physical re-creation . . . an opportunity and a challenge to pause in the brush work of life and view it with a sense of detachment; a conscious interruption of life's routines for both inventory and planning.

(3) *A time for special worship* . . . and the reaffirmation that man does not live by bread alone . . . a time to stress the spiritual and abiding, in contrast to the

physical and ephemeral — " a Sabbath unto the Lord your God."

(4) *A period for intensive study* . . . Torah readings in the synagogue . . . ethical and inspirational literature at home.

(5) *An occasion for family devotion.* . . . "You shall revere every man his mother and his father, and you shall keep my sabbaths." . . . "You shall do no manner of work, neither you nor your son nor your daughter. . . "

(6) *A symbol of liberation* . . . "first of our sacred days, recalling the departure from Egypt." . . . "You should remember that you were once slaves in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God brought you out from there by a strong hand and an outstretched arm. That is why the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day."

(7) *A spur to social ideals.* . . . "Your man servant and your maid servant shall rest as well as you." . . "Thus says the Lord: Keep justice and do right, for My salvation is at hand, and My triumph will soon be revealed. Happy the man who does this, the son of man who holds fast by it, who keeps the Sabbath by not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

These elements inherent in the Jewish Sabbath must be clarified, particularized, made relevant to our own life and society, and—to a degree not inhibitory—codified. In the light of all factors, too, a concept of what constitutes "work" or "delight" must be defined. All this pertains to the book that is yet to be written.

ASHER BLOCK

BOOKS RECEIVED

TALES OF THE HASIDIM—The Early Masters, by Martin Buber. Schocken Books, New York, 1947. 335 pp. $3.75.

PALESTINE—A STUDY OF JEWISH, ARAB AND BRITISH POLICIES. 2 vols. Contains contributions by a number of eminent authorities in their respective fields, also a three-section map of Palestine. Published for the Esco Foundation for Palestine, Inc., by Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1947. 1,380 pp. with index. $12.00.

FRANZ KAFKA, by Max Brod, a biography of the distinguished German Jewish author by his closest friend, also a distinguished author. Schocken Books, New York, 1947. 236 pp. $3.00.

DANCES OF PALESTINE, prepared by Katya Delakova and Fred Berk, drawings by Myril Adler, B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, 1947. 32 pp. $1.00.

ESSAYS ON ANTISEMITISM, edited by Koppel S. Pinson, publication No. 2 of Jewish Social Studies, second edition, revised and enlarged. Conference on Jewish Relations, New York, 1946. 269 pp. $2.50.

FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY, edited by F. Ernest Johnson, prepared for the Institute for Religious and Social Studies. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1947. 278 pp. $2.00.

JACOB'S DREAM, by Richard Beer-Hofmann, a poetic drama, translated from the German by Ida Bension Wynn. The Jewish Publication Society, Phila., Pa., 1946. 188 pp. $2.50.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE, Proceedings of the Third Session, edited by Ruth Hershman, American Jewish Conference, New York, 1946. 292 pp. $2.00.

UNITY AND DIFFERENCE IN AMERICAN LIFE, edited by H. M. MacIver, published for the Institute for Religious and Social Studies. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1947. 168 pp. $2.00.

WEB OF LUCIFER, by Maurice Samuel, a dramatic novel of the Borgias, with overtones for our times. Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y., 1947. 487 pp. $3.00.

MASTER OF TROYES: Rashi the Educator, by Samuel M. Blumenfield, published for the Jewish Institute of Religion. Behrman House, New York, 1947. 308 pp. $3.50.

YOTZERE SIFRUT HA-YELADIM SHELLANU (Hebrew Writers for Children), by Zevi Scharfstein, Shilo, New York, 1947, 122 pp. $1.50.

PROMISED LAND, by Ellen Thorbecke, illustrated by I. David, a book of artistic format replete with illustration both of Biblical and modern scenes and with a sympathetic description of the organization and life of the Yishuv. Harper and Brothers, New York, 174 pp. $3.50.

PERETZ, edited by Sol Liptzin, selections from his stories and essays, in Yiddish with an English translation by the editor. Yiddish Scientific Institute—YIVO, New York 1947, 380 pp. $4.00.

Correspondence

Preparing the Zionist Case for Presentation to UN

Sirs:

The observations which you made in THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST which I received yesterday in reference to the transfer of the Palestine Question to the United Nations indicates that you are definitely on the right track. I am, however, deeply concerned over the confusion that still exists in the minds of our leaders.

You will recall that in the past whenever any part of a report was favorable to the Jews, the Mandatory rejected same on the grounds that that particular part of the report was beyond the "terms of reference."

By way of illustration, the Royal Commission, as many of the other Commissions, condemned partition, stated there was no question as to the legal rights of the Jews to Palestine, rejected as unmeritorious the claims of the Arabs to Palestine, etc. But Britain said this was *obiter dictum.*

Therefore, as you correctly indicated, unless Britain presents the Palestine question to the United Nations "in good faith" Palestine will continue to be a world problem.

The final *"terms of reference" are therefore of the utmost importance.* That is why Britain is attempting to restrict the inquiry so that the paricular committee will be powerless to act or even recommend the proper solution. We must stop assuming that Britain has the arbitrary right to dictate the "terms of reference."

The Zionist Organization, however, should supplement any petition filed by Britain by way of a "cross reference," giving the United Nations organization wide latitude not only to inquire into Britain's misconduct in the area of Palestine but in the entire Middle East.

We must not make the same mistake that some of our leaders continue to make in reference to the eastern three-quarters of Palestine.

In re: Trans-Jordan. A discussion of the rights of the Jewish people to this portion of Palestine is usually avoided or mistreated. Even the recent otherwise excellent book "The Zionist Movement" fails in this respect. It sets forth a copy of the memorandum submitted by Britain to the Security Council in reference thereto but leaves its readers in a quandary as to the very right of the trustee to submit such a memo in view of the actual terms of the Mandate and the legal concept of trusteeship.

Public Opinion. In 1919 petitions containing the signatures of 523,048 persons from all parts of the United States urging the appointment of Great Britain as Trustee of Palestine and for the development of Palestine into a Jewish commonwealth were presented to our government.

(These petitions were considered at that time of considerable importance in bringing about the active intervention of President Harding and our Congress in the Palestine question.)

Inasmuch as the diplomats at the League of Nations emphasized and recognized that *public opinion* would eventually control the conduct of the mandatory power, similar petitions should now be circulated in the United States which should bring forth millions of signatures urging our government to take a definite positive position before the United Nations for the establishment of a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine.

Other countries should be invited to join in a world wide plan, with similar petitions.

In this respect there are some interesting comments in the Encyclopaedia Britannica under Mandates, Page 790: "The Mandate is a 'Sacred Trust of Civilization' to be assumed by nations who (inter alia) by reason of their resources can best undertake this responsibility and are willing to accept it. The altruistic nature of this pledge was confirmed in a reply to a German protest, 'the Mandatory powers', said the alias, 'insofar as they may be appointed trustees by the League of Nations, will derive no benefit from such trusteeship'.

"A mandated territory differs from a protectorate in that the protecting power in the latter obtains rights over the population and against other powers, whereas a mandatory in its capacity as guardian assumes obligations both toward the population and the League."

Continuing on Page 791, "The sole means at the disposal of the League for compelling the proper execution of the Mandate is the force of public opinion.

"The revocation of the Mandate for maladministration though theoretically possible, is in practice unthinkable. The terms of the covenant therefore contemplate self-government as the natural fruition of the Mandate—in the case of A Class at no distant date. The new State will then take its place as a member of the League.

"The Mandate system accords, for the first time in history, international sanction to the principle of trusteeship, and of public responsibility to a supervising authority for the obligations laid down in the trust deed in regard to mandated territory."

Therefore the proper presentation of our case before the U.N. is of utmost importance. Assuming that we have laid the proper groundwork therefor with "proper terms of reference," enlightened world opinion, lobbying of an educational nature, etc., world-wide peti-

tions, etc., all of these will, however, fail unless the case is competently presented.

The Nuremberg trials would have failed in spite of public opinion, etc., in the absence of a proper presentation.

Not unlike the tactics used in the Nuremberg trials, national and international experts in their respective fields from the various countries must be immediately engaged, gathered together and organized in established headquartrs in New York.

These experts, aided with the use of maps, charts, movies, etc., must be used to penetrate, shock and so reach the conscience of those who aim to decide our future that they will find it practically impossible to do otherwise than what is right.

MOSARC EMERSON

On the Future Sponsorship of CANRA

Sirs:

I respect your right to differ with the American rabbinate in the matter of the reorganization of CANRA, but I must ask you for a fairer presentation of the case of the rabbinate than was contained in your editorial entitled "The JWB and the Chaplaincy." (April 18, 1947).

It is not quite correct to report, as does your editorial, that the rabbis feel "that religious activities should be in the hands of the religious functionaries; and that, in this case, the rabbis themselves should take over the work of CANRA." Nor is it true that in the opinion of the rabbis, "the clergy, and not the laity" should represent the religious interests of the Jewish community with the War and Navy Departments. No one knows better than the rabbis that in Judaism the "clergy" has never had—and never sought—a monopoly on religion. On the contrary, the rabbis have always recognized and encouraged lay interest and leadership in Jewish religious life, and, to be sure, some of the greatest spokesmen of our people of the past and the present have been lay leaders.

Let us understand one another clearly. The issue on the question of CANRA is not at all one of clergy or "religious functionaries" vs. laity. The issue is one of religious interests vs. secular interests in Jewish life. The JWB in all of its history has never pretended to speak for the religious interests of the American Jewish community. At best it was a Jewish secular organization with "neutral" attitudes towards religion. Ideologically, therefore, CANRA never belonged to JWB. It came and stayed under JWB auspices as a wartime measure. At the begining of World War II, and on several occasions since then, rabbinical leaders, including members of CANRA itself, have pointed to the incongruity of this relationship, but action was always deferred on the grounds that "there was a war going on" and that the chaplaincy program might suffer by a shift of the auspices of CANRA.

You are quite right when you say that the chaplains in our armed forces "represent Jewish life as a whole," and that, consequently, "they should be responsible to as broad a constituency (in Jewish life) as possible." But by what yardstick do you measure the JWB to be "far more representative of the totality of Jewish interests than the Synagogue Council?" That's quite a broad statement to make! What can be the Jewish interests of an organization which was initially brought into being for the primary purpose of hastening the process of Americanization, which originally called itself the "American Association" (see article "The Synagogue Center and Jewish Community Center" by Max Arzt in *The Reconstructionist* of April 18, 1947), and which has since maintained a neutral position not alone on the Jewish religion but on all vital phases of Jewish life? And, isn't there a contradiction in a Reconstructionism which on the one hand preaches that Judaism is a religious civilization, and on the other permits itself to editorialize that an organization which is anything but religious represents the totality of Jewish life?

If a secular organization, such as the Jewish Welfare Board, can be spoken of as representing Jewish religious life in America, surely the rabbis have a right to look to the three national synagogue organizations and the Synagogue Council of America as representing not alone the ecclesiastical, but also the educational, social and cultural interests of the American Jewish community. You must bear in mind that those of us who are in earnest about the doctrine of Judaism as a Religious Civilization, also believe in the centrality of the synagogue in Jewish life, and conceive of the synagogue not alone as a *bet ha-tefillah* but also as a *bet ha-keneset* and a *bet ha-midrash*, and of religion not alone as ritual, worship and prayer, but as a way of life.

Lastly, permit me to say that your reference to the resolutions adopted at the recent convention of the Jewish chaplains is misleading and represents careless reporting. You go to the trouble of reporting that at this convention "resolutions were passed praising highly the achievements of the JWB during the war, and the manner in which the CANRA functioned," and then you said: "If there were dissenting views among the chaplains, these views did not appear among the resolutions." This is what is known as a half-truth. The full truth is that in all, the chaplains passed three resolutions bearing on JWB and CANRA. Resolution No. 1 thanked CANRA for its splendid cooperation with the work of the chaplains. Resolu-

tion No. 2 thanked JWB for the supplies and other help which it rendered the chaplains throughout the war. And, Resolution No. 3 called for a reorganization of CANRA so as to remove it from the auspices of JWB. It is most regrettable indeed that Resolution No. 3 escaped your reporter's attention.

BERNARD SEGAL

The United Synagogue's Interest in Jewish Music

Sirs:

I have read the editorial, "The Role of the Cantor in Modern Jewish Life," in the March 21st issue of THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST with great interest and appreciation.

You are well aware of the fact that the primary purpose of calling of the Conference on Jewish Muisc in the Synagogue was to seek to find ways and means of helping both our congregations and our Cantors to work together in the interest of making Jewish music *in all of its forms* more meaningful in the lives of our congregants.

As the proceedings of the Conference, which are to be published shortly, will indicate, it is necessary that there be developed a more complete understanding of the congregational needs of modern Conservative Synagogues on the part of our cantors as well as on the part of the rabbis. We realize that it will not be an easy thing to bring order out of the chaos which exists at the present time. We do, however, believe that, under the capable leadership of Cantor David J. Putterman, Director of the Department of Music of the United Synagogue, and with the complete and wholehearted cooperation of the United Synagogue of America and its affiliated congregations, we shall be able to improve and elevate Jewish musical standards in our congregations. I am sure that you realize our sincerity and determination.

Lest there be some who read your editorial and who gather therefrom that we of the United Synagogue are working at cross-purposes with Reconstructionism in this respect, I am taking the liberty of calling this letter to the attention of your readers.

ALBERT I. GORDON,
Executive Director,
United Synagogue of America

Secularism Via the Synagogue

Sirs:

The article by Rabbi Max Arzt in the April 18th issue of THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST is one of the most interesting examples of sociological misrepresentation I have seen in many a day. Briefly summarized, Rabbi Arzt's statement is that there is no possibility for cultural pluralism in America; the "melting pot" will fuse all that is indigenous to Jewish life as a cultural phenomen into a "full integration with the American people"; the only possibility of Jewish survival is that of its expression in theological institutions; ergo, the Jewish community center only succeeds in "ghettoizing" the Jew, where the synagogue center will permit for a more appropriate expression of Judaism in America.

This is neither the time nor the place for anyone to discuss with Rabbi Arzt the complete sociological inadequacy of the theory of the melting pot; he should be presumed to have had some knowledge of that by this time. One would like to ask Rabbi Arzt to define the phrase "a distinct American culture" in terms of existent factors in American life.

However, the point that intrigues me more than anything else in his article is the *pilpul* in his statements that, since American life will not accept a secular approach to Judaism, we should take these approaches and introduce them through the synagogue. I have no desire to rehash the fallacy of the theory of new wine in old bottles; I can only observe that if Rabbi Arzt feels that the *only* way to preserve Judaism is through the synagogue center, and if he is willing to channel through that center all the secular trends in Jewish life, he is going to have quite a difficult time in keeping it a *synagogue* center.

May I suggest that Rabbi Arzt, and those associates who agree with him in that thesis attempt to understand that, if there is any one theme characteristic of American life, it is the expression of rationalist liberalism upon which we call when we desire to effect any political action. I, too, deplore the compartmentalization of Jewish life into "religious" and "secular," but I see no reason to claim that it should be, in the light of our contemporary problem within the Jewish community, *either* one *or* the other.

Is Rabbi Arzt's synagogue center going to make a general appeal to *all* members of the community, regardless of parental or personal affiliation with any special synagogue, or is he going to restrict membership in his synagogue center, to those who belong to that synagogue? If the former, how will Rabbi Arzt deal with the other varieties of Jewish religious experiences? Does he plan to have at least three synagogue centers in any given community—or as many more as there are synagogues? In effect, is Rabbi Arzt willing to assume that the Jewish community of tomorrow will perpetuate the present tri-partite division?

Where will he put the Labor Zionist movement, the *Landsmanschaften,* the *Vereinen,* the varied "secular" groups who, children of the Russian Haskalah, have no place for the synagogue in their Jewish *weltanschauung?* Are they to be isolated, put in *harem,* or just

ignored? And where is he to put their children, who, reflecting the America that Rabbi Arzt speaks of, also do not approach Jewish life through theological institutions?

As I mentioned above, I don't know what is meant by the use of the word "secular" in contemporary Jewish theological discussion, unless the aim is to connote some derogatory implication as compared with the packed word, "religious." If Rabbi Arzt makes Jewish life in America an "either—or" proposition, he is flying in the face of sociological realities.

IRVING LEVITAS,
Director of Education, Jewish Community Center, Kansas City, Missouri.

For Direct Administration of Mandate by UN

Sirs:

There is a disease abroad in the world and its name is "diplomacy." Articles are continually being written and books are continually rolling off the press which fill our minds with the niceties of "diplomatic developments." The end result seems to be that we are being trained in the kind of "realistic thinking" which substitutes "national interests" for peace and exchanges conscienceless deals and callous heartlessness for justice.

While we are all preoccupied with being "diplomats," we are consistently being led from smaller to greater Munichs. Before we know it, we will again be delivered, bound hand and foot, unto the altar of Mars and Moloch.

I am fully in sympathy with your editorial analysis of the present Zionist position (*The Reconstructionist,* Vol. XIII, No. 3) except with the restriction of any change in the status of the Mandate for Palestine to the association of the United States in its administration. I agree that we should insist on the continuation of the Mandate under the United Nations instead of calling for a final showdown on the matter of a Jewish Commonwealth. After all, the Mandate has never yet been applied.

But let us face the facts. Britain robbed us while we were being trained to its way of thinking. We were taught that if we wanted to earn the place of a nation among nations, our leaders must be "diplomats." Do we in our great patriotism believe that American political "career men" will be any more unselfishly honest than British colonial officials have been? Is placing the future of Palestine in the hands of both American and British diplomats any more "realistic" than calling for a United Nations Organization which will be more than a debating society and a friction generator? Let us press for UN solution of the DP problem instead of dickering for alliances with a new Germany. We have lost a Munich with the dissolution of UNRRA. Let us build more not fewer UN projects.

I suggest that Palestine be mandated to the UN and not to any particular nation or group of nations. The United Nations, aiming as it should, at the federalization of the world, should itself accept the mandate over Palestine. Why is it any less "realistic" for Palestine to become the first dominion of a new Federal World Government than for it to become the last dominion of a dying, old empire? The only answer it that there is as yet no UN Government. Well, what are we waiting for? Or do we still delude ourselves into thinking that we can get speedier action from diplomats whose primary concern is what they call "national interests?"

Let us take off the striped trousers of the diplomat and put on the working shorts of the *halutz* and pioneer for both world peace and national liberation at the same time. Is it too much for us actually to mean what we say in prayer?

ARIO S. HYAMS

Crescendo

By D. EDGAR TAINE

The music you play, Daddy,
Is the stream's widening ripple
When I drop a pebble down;
The train's whistle starting faint
Growing frenzied in my ear;
The pale, yellow sun creeping away
Full, fiery, red o'er the horizon;
It's the throaty rumble of distant thunder
Coming closer, crashing above the tops of trees.

Tell me, Daddy,
Is the wail of the Jew like
The music you play?